

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 9, 2014

The Honorable Sloan Gibson
Acting Secretary
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington DC 20420

Dear Acting Secretary Gibson:

It is clear that our nation's veterans have lost confidence in the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to deliver the health care they need and have earned. This problem is particularly acute around Fayetteville, which is home to Fort Bragg and more than 157,000 veterans in the surrounding 21-county area.

Since the allegations of misconduct at the Phoenix VAMC came to light, I have heard from veterans in North Carolina about concerns they have at the facilities where they receive care, including the Fayetteville VA Medical Center (VAMC), and have shared those concerns with the VA and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Given the central role played by the Fayetteville VAMC in serving these veterans, I am appalled and disturbed by the scale of the problems identified in the VA's report, which include wait times for new patients that are the third highest in the country and wait times for established patients that are the worst in the country by far. This is unacceptable and must be addressed immediately.

We must take extraordinary actions to alleviate the backlog of veterans awaiting care, including working with private health care providers in the area to expand options for those who are facing waits for care at the Fayetteville VAMC. In order to begin the process of correcting these failures and rebuilding the faith of veterans in the VA's ability to provide the health care they need, I believe it is important that you visit the Fayetteville VAMC as soon as possible to personally ensure the issues raised in today's report are being addressed and explain directly to veterans the measures being taken to establish high quality and accessible care at the facility.

We must keep the promises made to the men and women who have served our country with honor and distinction. I am committed to working with you to ensure that North Carolina's veterans receive the respect and the benefits they have earned in a timely manner.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kay R. Hagan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Senator Kay R. Hagan